

REMARKS:

Independent claim 29 is amended to address the Examiner's objection. Claim 29 is also amended to include subject matter previously recited in objected-to claim 44. Accordingly, claim 44 is canceled herein. It is believed that amending claim 29 in this manner should lead to allowance of claim 29. No new matter is added.

Independent claim 21 is amended to recite subject matter similar to that previously recited in claim 44. It is believed that amending claim 21 in this manner should lead to allowance of claim 21. No new matter is added.

Independent claim 40 is amended to recite subject matter similar to that previously recited in claim 44. It is believed that amending claim 40 in this manner should lead to allowance of claim 40. No new matter is added.

In view of the above-noted amendments to the independent claims, claims 37-39 are canceled herein and claim 26 is amended for purposes of clarity.

In view of the above-noted claim amendments, claims 21-23, 25, 26, 29-36, 40, 41 and 45 are currently pending, with claims 21, 29 and 40 being independent claims. Claims 1-20, 24, 27, 28, 37-39 and 42-44 are canceled.

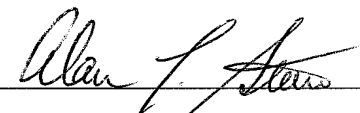
In that independent claims 21, 29 and 40 are amended to include subject matter that the Examiner indicated as allowable (i.e., the subject matter previously recited in claim 44), it is believed that these claims should be allowable. Furthermore, in that "[c]laims in dependent form shall be construed to include all the limitations of the claim incorporated by reference into the dependent claim," claims 22, 23, 25, 26, 30-36, 41 and 45 should also be allowable. *See 37 C.F.R. §1.75(c).*

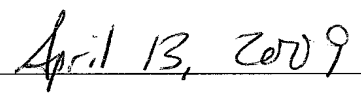
The Applicant is not conceding in this application that claims 21, 29 and 40 are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and

cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner. The Applicant respectfully reserves the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuations and/or divisional patent applications.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and remove the rejections of claims 21-23, 25, 26 and 29-36, 40, 41 and 45 and to allow all of the pending claims as now presented for examination. For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Should any unresolved issue remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' agent at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted:


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